

FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

December 31, 1953

Negotiations between China and India have opened today, the last day of December, fulfilling our promise that they would be held in 1953.

We believe that Sino-Indian relations will continue to improve. Some long-standing problems that are still unsettled can surely be solved smoothly. The principles that should govern relations between our two countries were put forward soon after the founding of New China, namely, the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

It is inevitable that there should be some problems between two big countries, particularly when, like China and India, they have a common border. But all unresolved problems can be discussed, providing the negotiators abide by these principles.

Excerpt from remarks at the opening session of negotiations held in Beijing from December 31, 1953, to April 29, 1954, between delegations of the Chinese and Indian governments concerning relations between the two countries with regard to Tibet. The five principles enunciated here were formally included in the preface to the "Agreement Between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India on Trade and Communications Between the Tibet Region of China and India", and in late June 1954, when Comrade Zhou Enlai visited India and Burma, they were also incorporated in Sino-Indian and Sino-Burmese joint statements.